LABOUR MONTHLY

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HAIL MORNING STAR!

The Editor

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THE PRICES & INCOMES BILL

J. E. Mortimer

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COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN GHANA

Thomas Hodgkin

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Youth on the March—Tony Hetherington, Y.C.N.D.
Trade Unions—Student Style—Paul Moorman
Trends in Television Drama—Stuart Douglass

APRIL 1966

Two Shillings

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Notes of the Month

HAIL MORNING STAR!

Bright morning star, day's harbinger

MILTON

March 21, 1966

The election will be over by the time these Notes are read. But Britain's crisis will not be over. All the problems which, combined with a precarious parliamentary majority, led to this second general election within seventeen months, resume their battering assault. For the essence of the problem was not the precarious parliamentary majority, although this added to the difficulties. The essence of the problem was Britain's imperialist world policy, its costly bankruptcy and disastrous effects on the home economy, and consequent deepening class contradictions expressed in the economic offensive against the trade unions, shop stewards and wage standards. If the present election, as every prospect indicates, has led to a decisive rebuff for Toryism, and a strengthened majority for Labour, this is of positive political value as an expression of popular feeling in terms of the Tory-Labour confrontation, whatever the limitations and just grounds for criticism of official Labour policy so far. But there is no sign yet of the advance to the essential alternative policy which can alone successfully tackle Britain's problems. The value of the campaign of the fifty seven Communist candidates was precisely that it expressed such an alternative policy and helped to mobilise support for it. The fight for such a new policy will go forward, and will need to go forward, in the coming period, as the bankruptcy of the existing policies becomes increasingly demonstrated. The biggest battles for Britain's future are now in front. Therefore it is appropriate and welcome that this April will see the birth of the daily organ of the united left, the *Morning Star*. Carrying forward in direct line of inheritance a proud tradition of over half a century, from the old militant *Daily Herald*, the *Workers' Weekly*, the *Sunday Worker* and the valiant thirty six years of the *Daily Worker*, today, in the midst of the most concentrated, powerful and unscrupulous millionaire press monopoly ever known in the records of this country or in any country in the world, the *Morning Star* will engage in its daily combat of David against Goliath to carry high the banner of the cause of the people and of socialism.

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World In Movement

The world does not stand still for a British general election. We need now to look more widely afield for what is developing and the new questions which are arising. The artificial hothouse climate of the conventional electoral pillow-fight, in which the biggest issues are concealed from the people by the tacit agreement of the major parties, and ritual slogans hurtle through the air like brickbats 'efficiency', 'realism', 'modernisation', 'toughness', 'action, not words' —this last preceding a 5,000 word manifesto—draws a temporary curtain over Britain to screen it from the impact of world events and divert public opinion into a cosily parochial inwards-turned absorption in the sporting interest of a local contest between doughty champions with wooden swords, while the world slides by. This was true even when Britain was the foremost world power. During the three elections preceding the first world war the real strategic policy and secret naval-military commitments which prepared that war were completely concealed from the people, and were never mentioned in the election. The slogans of these three elections turned on free trade and protection, the 'people's budget' or 'peers versus the people', while the decisions which were in fact to seal the fate of that generation and the future of Britain were never even divulged to the majority of the Cabinet, let alone to the electors.

Election Secrecy

After the second world war the decision to construct the British atom bomb, which may prove equally decisive for the fate of Britain, never came before the electorate, and was also not divulged at the time to the majority of the Cabinet. So in this election the war in Vietnam disappeared from view, save for the occasional heckler, so far as the major parties were concerned. The central fact of Britain's present situation, that Britain is now a satellite of an American military alliance, an American nuclear base, and linked with bellicose American and West German militarists, never came before the electorate for decision, so far as the parties which could constitute a Government on the basis of the sovereign vote of the electorate were concerned. Even the grand battle over entry into the Common Market, in which the aim of participation in a reactionary monopolist bloc of a minority of states of Europe was presented as going 'into Europe', was a characteristic concealment of the real choice before the British people in relation to Europe and the unity of Europe. Thus the election confused, rather than illuminated, the decisive

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choice which the British people will have to make over their future in the rapidly changing world of today. But the test of reality will not be so easily evaded.

Britain's Choice

The choice before the British people is the choice between the imperialist path, that is, the 'East of Suez' path, the Nato American satellite path, the nuclear fall-guy path, the arms profligacy and bankruptcy path, or else to make the radical change to the only alternative, an independent world policy for peace in unity with the advancing nations of the world, liberation from the crippling legacy of the old imperialist strategy, and on this basis real social and economic reconstruction and modernisation at home in the interests of the people. The Communist candidates represented this alternative, which corresponds to the outlook of wide sections of the left in the labour movement. All the events following the election will further reinforce the necessity of this choice. But in this election, for the purposes of this election, for the period of the election, imperialism disappeared from view. No one from the major parties had ever heard of imperialism. Before the election Mr. Wilson might ostentatiously boast of his 'East of Suez' strategy. Before the election the Tories might trounce Labour in a dramatic eve of dissolution debate for failing to increase arms expenditure as much as the Tories would have liked. Before the election Defence Minister Healey from the safe remoteness of Canberra might proclaim on February 2, 1966:

> We have no intention of ratting on any of our commitments. We intend to remain and shall remain fully capable of carrying out all the commitments we have at the present time, including those in the Far East, in the Middle East and in Africa. We do intend to remain in a military sense a world power.

'*In a military sense a world power*'. No room for misunderstanding here. 'In the Far East, in the Middle East and in Africa'. Plain enough. This is what has to be paid for by deficits on the balance of payments and 'tough' offensives on the workers at home to put through 'unpopular' policies in order to pay the bill.

Election Conjuring Trick

But in the election all this disappeared in a fountain of sweetness and light. The Tory Election Manifesto by no means called for increased arms expenditure. While slipping in a mention of support for the aircraft carrier (under the philanthropic heading 'Help

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Preserve World Peace') it sternly demanded that arms expenditure be 'related to our financial resources', and set the sights for 'in the Far East reducing the pressure on our resources'. The Labour Election Manifesto made no mention of 'East of Suez', which became 'Peace-Keeping Outside Europe'. Mr. Healey's 'in a military sense a world power' was toned down to 'a world power with world responsibilities', with the warning that 'this is not the nineteenth century when Britain ruled one quarter of mankind'. 'Full support to the authority and efficiency of the United Nations' was stated to be the keynote of foreign policy. No mention of the war in Southern Arabia or repression in Aden—in direct violation of the nine-to-one decision of the United Nations. No mention of bombing and napalm in Vietnam, but only expression of the anxious desire to end 'the cruel war in Vietnam', to 'end the tragic conflict in Vietnam' if only 'North Vietnam' (the National Liberation Front of the South Vietnam people resisting the invaders and already administering four-fifths of South Vietnam was of course invisible to the Labour Election Manifesto, as also to the Tories and Liberals, all equally docile American satellites) would accept the United States offers of negotiation and recognise 'the wisdom of making peace'. In the very midst of the election, mass midnight arrests of the popular leaders in Aden under the emergency regime of the British military occupation cast a lurid light on all these peaceful professions. But of course this insignificant fact was tucked well away as a minute news item, and was invisible in the election.

United Nations and Britain

In this connection the actual record of this 'full support' to the United Nations, claimed by the Labour Election Manifesto, may be noted in the continual opposition votes or abstentions registered by Britain as part of the tiny colonialist bloc, including South Africa and Portugal, against the overwhelming majority of member states on issues affecting self-determination and the fight against colonialism:

1965, November 5. *ADEN.* Resolution calling for abolition of the emergency regime, ending of the repression, release of all political prisoners, and 'immediate and complete removal' of the British bases as already demanded in the resolution of 1963. Adopted by the Assembly 90 to 11. *Opposition* 11: U.S., Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Portugal, France, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg.

1965, November 5. *RHODESIA.* Resolution calling on Britain to 'employ all necessary measures, including military force' for suspension of constitution,

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release of political prisoners, repeal of discriminatory legislation, establishment of democratic rights, and convening of a constitutional conference of all parties to draw up a constitution on the basis of universal suffrage, and fixing of earliest date for independence on this basis. This resolution was adopted six days before UDI, and its fulfilment would have forestalled UDI. Adopted by the Assembly 82 to 9. *Opposition* 9: U.S., Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg. Britain spoke against and refused to participate in the vote.

1965, December 15. *SOUTH AFRICA*. Resolution calling for 'economic and diplomatic sanctions' against South Africa. Adopted by the Assembly 80 to 2 (South Africa and Portugal). *Abstentions* 16, including U.S., Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Japan, France and nine other European states.

These are only a few specimens from a host. In view of the well known disappearance of imperialism, which is supposed only to survive as an obsolete illusion in the minds of communist doctrinaires and a few suspicious Afro-Asians, it is remarkable how, when it comes to the hard test of voting, the tight little imperialist bloc continues to expose itself with a conspicuous degree of cohesion.

Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria

When we turn from the honeyed words of the election to the realities of what has been happening meanwhile in the world a significantly different and gravely urgent situation is revealed. From Ghana to Indonesia the supposedly moribund imperialism, acting through the technique of violent armed coups by reactionary military dictators who are always the most favoured champions of Western civilisation, has launched a full-scale offensive across three continents to turn back the advance of national liberation. The military coup in Nigeria should not be identified with these series, since it was directed, not against a progressive anti-imperialist regime, but against the most pro-imperialist reactionary feudal forces and corrupt politicians linked with the feudal emirs and imperialism, and therefore by this destructive role could open the way to a more progressive development, although the outcome is still undetermined, and the British neo-colonialist hold on Nigeria and its resources and the heavy obstacles in the path of the democratic forces are still strong.

Warning Voices

In the June issue of this journal last year, under the title 'Imperialist Counter-Offensive in Africa' Jack Woddis warned:

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> U.S. imperialism, aided and abetted by its partners-in-crime, especially Britain and West Germany, has passed over to a new counter-offensive in Africa.

He instanced the significance of the installation of Tshombe, since followed by the notorious Mobutu, on the basis of imperialist mercenary troops in the Congo; the assassination of the Premier of Burundi by a former employee of the U.S. Embassy in that state; the kidnapping of three national leaders in the Congo (Brazzaville), including the Chairman of the Supreme Court, Prosecutor of the Republic and the Director of Information, and subsequent discovery of their corpses shockingly mutilated; the murder of the outstanding national leader, Pinto, by gunmen in Kenya, with reports of the gunmen's plans having been intended to reach also the other main left leaders, Odinga, Oneko and Kaggia; the bombing attempts and murder plots revealed in Ghana and Uganda, compelling exceptional security measures (still not sufficient, as the coup in Ghana revealed); the concerted moves to disrupt the Organisation of African Unity. Not without reason President Nyerere of Tanzania signalled last year the developing danger:

> I think that we are at present passing through the stage of a second invasion of Africa.

The events of this year are underlining the justice of this warning.

Unity Against the Imperialist Offensive

There is no doubt that among the factors giving rise to this situation the recent temporary disruptive trends affecting the international communist movement, whose unity has in the past always been and should always be the main bulwark making possible the advance of national liberation in our era, have helped to encourage and facilitate this new offensive of imperialism. It has become evident that what might have initially appeared as ideological differences of estimation and tactics, understandable in the complex modern international situation, and capable of reasoned collective discussion and clarification on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and in the light of the realities of the modern international situation, have developed in the more recent period, following on refusal of the tried method of collective international discussion, into a direct campaign of open disruption. The campaign of disruption has taken the form of noisy public denunciation of the majority of socialist states, and especially the pioneer and strongest guard of the revolu-

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tion, the Soviet Union, as traitors surrendering to capitalism and allied with imperialism (an old song, familiar for close on half a century ever since 1917, but ceaselessly seeking for new generations of novices who may believe the tune to be a 'left' one), and open calls for splits and attempts to organise splits of all communist parties. This situation has encouraged the Western imperialists to calculate publicly on the opportunity presented and to judge the moment favourable to let loose their offensive. While recognising that the modern world balance no longer permits the old straight-line Dulles strategy of the direct assault for the elimination of communism from the world, they seek to begin with the periphery, that is, the newly independent countries, still at an early stage of development, as the more vulnerable sector. The conclusion is inescapable. The inexorable lesson from this offensive is the urgent necessity to restore international communist unity and to oppose all splits, and, pending the clarification of ideological issues, to direct all efforts to develop world-wide unity of action, equally of the socialist countries and the international working class, of the newly independent countries and all opponents of imperialism, to counter and defeat this new offensive of imperialism.

History Does Not Move Backwards

In the final analysis this new offensive of imperialism, although dangerous, and imposing the most serious lessons to be learned, also in respect of internal relations and security in the newly independent countries, is not a measure of increased strength of imperialism, but of its increasing recklessness and desperation. The initial calculation of the 'Soapy Williams' technique, or of Macmillan's 'Wind of Change' oratory, to undermine the advance of national liberation and the newly independent states by peaceful penetration and 'aid' and economic infiltration and the 'Peace Corps' or slick use of the 'Commonwealth' technique, has not proved adequate in face of the rapid advance of political consciousness in the national liberation movement, open exposure of neo-colonialism, and determined advance of the more progressive newly independent states to carry through a far-reaching economic and social reconstruction, throwing off the shackles of colonial economy and utilising, no longer abstract generalised slogans about 'socialism', but the teachings of scientific socialism. It is at this point that the imperialists have moved over to the technique of the gunman, the military coup and the establishment of military dictatorial regimes as the only solution. Military

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dictatorship becomes the model of the 'Western democratic way of life' to save these countries from the horrors of 'totalitarianism'. Marshal 'I Love Hitler' Ky becomes the symbol of the United States Holy Crusade for Western civilisation, backed by a quarter of a million invading American troops, to teach the Vietnam people the American meaning of 'freedom'.

Persian Empire and Marathon

But the sense of doom of their enterprise haunts the American strategists and political leaders, and has turned the former jovial wheeler-dealer Johnson into a wasp-tongued fury. 'Unhappy Year' was the prediction of *Newsweek* for 1966, while the *U.S. News and World Report* described the Vietnam war as 'the most unpopular of all wars waged by the United States'. Walter Lippmann went further in the *New York Herald-Tribune* of January 5:

> Mr. Johnson knows that he is in a very grave crisis. It is worse than that. He is on the verge of making the kind of ruinous historical mistake which the Athenians made when they attacked Syracuse, and which Napoleon and Hitler made when they attacked Russia.

James Reston described the atmosphere in Washington as characterised by 'a growing mood of gloomy fatalism about Vietnam'. In vain General McNamara tries to buoy up sinking spirits and answer the criticism of the *New York Times* military correspondent, Hansen Baldwin, that American armed forces are dangerously overextended all over the world, by boasting of the inexhaustible abundance of American armed forces and weapons and wealth and reserves, and claiming that in addition to maintaining and increasing the existing 300,000 in South East Asia, without diminishing the forces in Europe and elsewhere, the United States could further deploy at short notice a further army of 350,000 'anywhere in the world'. All this grandiose boasting of infinite world power to subdue any recalcitrant nation anywhere could only recall the similar ancient boasts of the lords of the mighty far-flung Persian Empire, as Darius dispatched his vast host of 100,000 fighting men across the seas to subdue the tiny Athenian nation. But the end was Marathon. In fury at such a rebuff to the omnipotence of Persia, Darius began to assemble a yet vaster host from the infinite resources of the Persian Empire, and ten years later his son Xerxes dispatched no less than 900,000 men to crush the tiny Athenian nation. But the end was Salamis. It is true that Darius and Xerxes lacked the modern civilised instruments of bombing and napalm to spread terror and

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destruction. Nevertheless, there may be a lesson here for the modern lords of American imperialism, boasting of their omnipotence, and straining themselves to apoplexy to crush the resistance of the heroic tiny Vietnam people.

Britain's 'Defence' Dilemma

If the conflict between dreams of omnipotence and the realities of a changing world is acute today for American imperialism, for Britain the caricature of this conflict in the agonising dilemma between the nostalgia of 'world power' and the limitations of diminished resources takes on the character of a painful farce which is played out in public before the eyes of a contemptuous world. The 'Defence' White Paper repeats this mournful dilemma on every page without resolving it. On the one hand, economic necessity dictates the attempt to limit the annual increase in the crushing burden of arms expenditure to a total which can be claimed to represent not more than £2,000 million in 1964 prices. On the other hand, the attempt to discover possible cuts is combined with a refusal to abandon commitments in any region of the world. The promised 're-negotiation' of Nassau was blocked by the United States; the proposed reduction of troops in Europe was blocked by West Germany; suggestions for a future withdrawal from Singapore were resisted equally by the United States and Australia. Even the plan to leave Aden in 1968, with abandonment of all the costly installations, is accompanied by the pledge to increase forces elsewhere in the Persian Gulf and maintain a 'military presence' in the Middle East. The cancellation of the naval aircraft carrier is accompanied by the expenditure of a fortune in dollars to buy American F111 planes as strategic nuclear bombers. Thus Britain on the basis of this plan succeeds in winning the worst of both worlds. The ruinous arms expenditure continues to crush the economy. But every one sees that the real power is no longer there.

Mr. Mayhew Tries to Have it Both Ways

Does Mr. Mayhew's revolt and resignation over the aircraft carrier offer an alternative policy for the left? On the contrary, Mr. Mayhew's resignation offered in some respects a peculiar reproduction of the classic model of the Aneurin Bevan resignation from the Attlee Labour Government just before the 1951 general election. Bevan resigned in April,1951, over a specific detail issue, the

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health charges imposed by Gaitskell as Chancellor of the Exchequer to help pay for the £4,700 million rearmament programme imposed on Britain by American orders. Bevan then enlarged his battlefront to declare opposition to the whole crushing rearmament programme, which he had officially sponsored in January as the government spokesman defending it in the parliamentary debate. On this basis he became for a few years the hero of many of the left, until he parted company over his support of the British H-bomb and made his peace with Gaitskell. Mr. Mayhew began his resignation as the spokesman of the admirals resigning in protest over the abandonment of the costly naval aircraft carrier. But in his letter of resignation and subsequent speech in parliament he enlarged the issue to criticise the whole 'East of Suez' policy and consequent crushing rearmament costs, and argued that abandonment of this ruinous strategy could bring down arms expenditure to £1,800 million and thereby release large sums for domestic reconstruction. Thus his peculiar line might seem to be calculated to win simultaneously the support of the Admirals and the High Tory Right, and of the Left in the labour movement, opposed to the 'East of Suez' policy and the burden of crippling arms expenditure. But the contradiction of this double line was too transparent. In vain he sought in his parliamentary speech on February 22 to defend his double line as 'logical and honourable':

> It seemed perfectly logical and honourable that while holding doubts about Britain's future role East of Suez, one could at the same time say that if the Government insisted on staying East of Suez the Navy would need new carriers.

In other words: 'I have considerable doubts about the desirability of the proposal to put my daughter into a house of ill fame, but if she does go I must insist that she have a new dress.'

Truth of Britain's Crisis

The true choice before Britain will have to be faced. All the electoral conjuring tricks and conspiracy of silence of the three Nato parties cannot indefinitely conceal this choice. All the official spokesmen of these parties were agreed that the central question was Britain's crisis in the sense of the crisis of the economic situation, the chronic recurring deficits in the balance of payments, stagnant production, inflation, the weakness of the pound, the necessity to increase production and exports in order that Britain should 'pay her way in the world'. On this basis endless moralising lectures were

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delivered by the leaders of all three parties to the workers to roll up their sleeves and produce more, limit consumption, submit to wage restraint and accept sacrifices through increased taxation or cuts in plans for social development. Fantastic statistical juggleries were employed (translation of increases of hourly earnings of a section on overtime into supposed total earnings of all workers, without taking into account the take-back through increased prices, taxation and contributions) to paint a picture of alleged vast increases in earnings or ruin through strikes as the supposed cause of the economic difficulties.

Conspiracy of Silence

These statistical jugglers (like Heath's '9-5-1') blandly ignored the fact that during this recent period the rate of wage increases and of strikes has been in general higher in most of Britain's industrial competitors than in Britain. They ignored the conclusion even admitted by *The Times* just before the election in its issue of February 2, 1966 (that is, before the pontifical sermon of the famous editorial on March 10 'Why the £ Is Weak', lecturing the people for their extravagance), on the basis of a survey of the United States, Britain, France, Italy, West Germany, Belgium and Holland during the period 1960-1965, that 'the increase in spending power or standard of living was lower in Britain than in any other country'. They ignored the report of the International Labour Office issued in the latter part of January, 1966, which signalised Britain as one of four countries, the others being Ireland, Hungary and South Korea, where, according to their estimation, workers' purchasing power, i.e. real earnings, *fell* in 1965, the drop being given as 0.2 per cent starting in the spring of 1965. Of course all these estimates are only estimates. There is nothing more misleading than these attempted statistical measures over a wide and complex field, which are then treated as inspired gospel. But certainly a remarkable contrast with Mr. Heath's 'nine for one', or Mr. Macleod's 'gallon from a pint pot'.

Hiding the Elephant

But alongside this gigantic sensationalist myth-making to blame the workers for the bankruptcy of the policies of British imperialism, the most painstaking silence was maintained on the most obvious immediate factor in Britain's special economic difficulties. Complete silence was maintained on the fact that even the record deficit of

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1964 would have been a surplus if it had not been for government overseas spending and private export of capital. Complete silence was maintained on the fact that a far higher proportion of Britain's imports is nowadays paid for by exports of goods than was done before the last war or in the classic days of British capitalism, but that the main factor of difference to cause the deficit despite higher exports was that government overseas expenditure of £16 million in 1938 had become £509 million, or £431 million net, in 1964. However, all the conspiracy of silence will not prevent the real facts continuing to inflict their penalty on Britain's economy and Britain's statesmen until the lesson is learned.

Nato in the Melting Pot

For in fact all the military-political assumptions on which the ruinous bi-partisan strategy of the past two decades were based are more and more proving obsolete and unreal in the changing world of today. What is the future of Nato? De Gaulle has given notice of withdrawal on the part of France and ordered the withdrawal of all American bases, troops, planes and installations. So of course all the 30,000 American troops from France, and bases and nuclear bombing planes are to be installed, in addition to those already established, in this obedient little island, which is always so notoriously hospitable to all immigrants, provided they do not come from the Commonwealth. Even Spain has given notice to the United States to withdraw her nuclear bombers and stop nuclear overflights, after the experience of the accidental dropping of the Palomares bomb and the subsequent shipping away of tonloads of radioactive soil to be disposed of in the United States. How much longer is Britain to remain the one passive satellite vassal, yoked in double harness with the neo-Nazis of Western Germany competitively courting Washington's favours, and the principal American Western nuclear base and target? Is the plan, which is already under discussion, to go forward that Nato, in the event of the final withdrawal of France, shall be replaced by a US-West-German-British Military Alliance, while de Gaulle visits Moscow to discuss a possible Franco-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression? Truly a reversal of alliances, with Britain on the wrong side. Is it not obvious that the true interests of Britain and the British people is to fulfil an independent world role, end once and for all the satellite status and foreign military occupation, and replace the division of Europe through Nato and the Common Market by working for the real unity of Europe through

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the economic and political peaceful co-operation and friendship of all the states of Europe, East and West?

Path to a New Policy

The battle for such a change of policy in the world role of Britain will be inextricably linked up with the home economic battles in the coming period after the election in Britain. For there is one thing which all the watchwords of the election, equally from the spokesmen of the Government, the Tories and the Liberals have made abundantly clear. They have made clear that after the election an economic offensive has been prepared to be let loose in the industrial field and in the sphere of living standards, to limit the rights of the trade unions and shop stewards, to limit wage increases by legislative means, and to limit consumption. Mr. Callaghan has promised that he will not impose 'severe' increases in taxation in his new budget. Mr. Brown has made clear that the legislation which could impose imprisonment for strikers refusing to comply with regulations will be pressed ahead. Mr. Gunter has warned that 'we as a nation are living beyond our means' (he did not mean the Government and its colossal overseas expenditure and military waste of the productive output of the workers), and held out the threat, unless productivity is increased, that 'measures deflationary in character must follow, and unemployment will arise'. The Tory offensive against the unions has been open and unconcealed. The 'Zinoviev Letter' of this election was the 'noose court' catchword, and, as with the Zinoviev forgery, its currency was facilitated by the assistance from the top levels of Labour's leadership. Hence it is necessary to be prepared for tough economic battles in the immediate future, which will require the unity of all trade unionists and all on the left in the labour movement. But from the nature of the issues involved these economic battles cannot be merely defensive in character. The economic offensive is bound up with the major political-military-strategic line which has demonstrated its bankruptcy in Britain's present situation and brought such disastrous consequences. The same unity which will be necessary to defeat the economic offensive against the unions and working class standards will be needed equally in the political field to compel the changes in policy which can alone end this bankrupt course and open the way to the different future for Britain corresponding to the aims and aspirations of the overwhelming majority of those voting Labour or Communist in this election.

R.P.D.

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THE PRICES AND INCOMES BILL

J. E. Mortimer

THE main purpose of the Prices and Incomes Bill is to restrain the wages and salaries of working people. It regards this as the key to holding down prices. The Bill introduces a new general principle in industrial relations in that, for the first time, it establishes a range of legal hazards for trade unionists and for trade unions seeking either to press a claim or to press for the implementation of a settlement already reached. If this principle were to be conceded there would be no logical limit to the extent to which trade union rights in relation to wage determination could be eroded. Any government in the future which sought to circumscribe still further the rights of unions on wage claims and settlements could claim that the principle of Government intervention, backed by the full rigour of the law, had already been established.

The Bill was introduced to Parliament towards the end of February. When this article was written the General Election campaign was in full swing and parliamentary consideration of the Bill had been suspended. It appeared likely, nevertheless, that the Bill would be re-introduced into the new Parliament.

The main provisions of the Bill are as follows:

(a) It reconstitutes on a statutory basis the National Board for Prices and Incomes. The function of the Board is to report on questions relating to prices and incomes referred to it by the Secretary of State.

(b) It provides that such pay and other claims as may be specified by Government Order shall be notified to the appropriate Minister within seven days of being presented. The responsibility for reporting the claim may be discharged by the person who presents this claim, a trade union acting on his behalf, the employer or an employer's organisation. All, however, have a legal responsibility for ensuring that the claim is notified to the Minister. Anyone who fails to comply with this obligation is liable to a fine not exceeding £50.

(c) It empowers the Government, by Order in Council—subject to approval in draft by Parliament and prior consultation with interested organisations—to require that proposed increases in prices or charges and settlements and awards on terms and conditions of employment shall be notified to the appropriate

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Minister within seven days. The Government will be able to specify by Order which kind of proposed price increases awards and settlements on terms and conditions of employment shall be notified. The responsibility for notification of awards and settlements on terms and conditions of employment will in this case rest with employers, though the responsibility may be discharged by the employer or union notifying the appropriate Minister. An employer who fails to comply with this requirement will be liable to a fine not exceeding £50.

(d) It stipulates that when a proposed price increase or an award or settlement on terms and conditions of employment has been notified to the appropriate Minister there shall be a standstill on its implementation for a period of not more than thirty days unless special permission is given by the Secretary of State. Within this thirty day standstill period the Secretary of State may refer the proposed price increase or award or settlement to the National Board for Prices and Incomes. If he does, there will be a further standstill period on the implementation of the price increase or award or settlement until the Board's report has been published. This further standstill period must not exceed three months. The National Board are required to report on cases referred to them in the light of the Government's incomes policy. Employers who fail to observe the standstill requirements are liable to be fined.

(e) It provides:

> If any person takes, or threatens to take any action, and in particular any action by way of taking part, or persuading others to take part, in a strike, with a view to compel, induce or influence any employer to implement an award or settlement in respect of employment at a time when the implementation of the award or settlement is forbidden under the foregoing provisions of this part of the Act he shall be liable:
>
> 1. On summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £100.
> 2. On conviction on indictment to a fine which, if the offender is not a body corporate, shall not exceed £500.

This means, in plain terms, that if a worker seeks in any way to press for the implementation of an award or settlement during the standstill period he can be fined up to £100 in a magistrate's court and up to £500 in a higher court. If a union supports its members in such action it also will be liable to have a penalty imposed on it.

If this Bill were ever to become law it would open up the possibility of a vast new area of legal action and penalties against workers and unions. It is an extremely poor argument to say that a Labour

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Government would administer it with reason and moderation. The Attorney General—whose consent is required before proceedings can be taken for an offence under the part of the Act dealing with standstills—can change, as indeed Governments change, and in the ultimate it is the judges who will interpret the new laws relating to industrial relations and trade unions in such a manner as to impose *new* liabilities on trade unionists.

It is because the Bill introduces this new range of legal hazards for workers and unions that nothing short of its complete withdrawal will be satisfactory. The real argument is not whether and in what direction it should be amended. The Bill should be opposed. There is some danger, however, that opposition to the Bill will be side-tracked into a debate concerned exclusively with amendments.

Fundamental opposition to the Bill must be maintained. Nevertheless, there are important detailed criticisms which can be made. The main criticism of detail is that the Bill is one-sided. Its teeth are intended to bite on wage and salary claims. There is no similar bite on profits and dividends. Firms will be able to increase their profits and dividends without reporting them or without a temporary standstill.

There is no real parallel between the requirements of the Bill in relation to prices on the one hand and pay claims on the other. No matter what the Prices and Incomes Board may say, prices—after the temporary standstill period—can be increased by the unilateral decision of the employers. They do not have to secure the agreement of anyone else to implement their proposed prices increases. In contrast, workers cannot increase their wages by unilateral decision. With or without the Prices and Incomes Board the workers still have to contend with the employers. The reports of the Prices and Incomes Board are bound to influence employers and generally to strengthen their resistance to pay claims. When a major claim, as distinct from a settlement, is referred to the Board it is unlikely that employers will enter into serious negotiations until the Board's report has been published.

In firms or industries where productivity is rising the likely effect of the new legislation would be to distribute the rewards to the advantage of the employer. Wages would be restrained, but there would be no compelling force on private employers to pass a substantial share of the benefits of increased productivity to consumers. In most firms the result would be an increase in profits. Unfortunately, some of our colleagues in the labour movement who favour a

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'planned incomes policy' overlook that there is no way in which workers in private firms who forgo wage claims can ensure that the benefit will go to other deserving groups of workers rather than to their employers. A 'planned incomes policy' makes sense in a planned economy but in a society where 80 per cent of industry and commerce is privately owned it can imply that restraints are imposed on well organised groups of workers to the advantage not of low paid workers or pensioners but to the advantage of private employers.

It ought also not to be overlooked that in industries making goods for export markets, firms are likely to charge 'what the market can bear'. Indeed, they may be able to establish a case that it is in the national interest that they should do so. These prices, however, may yield very high profits. Is the benefit to be restricted to the shareholders? The ideal solution, of course, would be for the benefit to accrue to the community at large but under capitalism this does not happen. In the circumstances those who work for the firm ought not to be restrained from obtaining some of the rewards which would otherwise go to the shareholders.

Within the British economy there are thousands of different prices and charges. They reflect an infinite variety of goods and services, with differences of quality and composition. The reports of the Prices and Incomes Board will, at best, influence a limited range of these goods and services. There are thousands of firms whose prices will be influenced hardly at all by the reports of the Board. The effect on the pay claims of large, organised groups of workers will, however, be much more direct.

The final argument against the Bill is that it deals with the wrong problem. It is not the wages of the workers that threaten the British economy. During the five-year period 1960-1965 wages in Britain rose by *less* than in any other leading industrial country in Western Europe. (See chart in *The Times*, February 15, 1966). What is needed, above all, to strengthen the British economy is a sharp reduction in overseas military spending. It is, for example, folly in the extreme to spend hundreds of millions of pounds on the purchase of American military aircraft when our balance of payments is already seriously in the red because of military commitments abroad and the net outflow of capital for private investment. The Prices and Incomes Bill ought to be withdrawn permanently. If its substance is to remain it cannot be amended satisfactorily. If the Bill is not withdrawn it must be defeated.

CORRECTION: On pps. 120 and 121 of the March issue, the names of 'P. M. Silva, Venezuela' and 'Y. El Sebai, U.A.R.' were inadvertently transposed.

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COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN GHANA

> The only requisite was that the Assembly should take a permanent holiday and that the republic's motto 'Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité', should be replaced by the unambiguous words, 'Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery!'
>
> (Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*)

Thomas Hodgkin

ALTHOUGH General Ankrah is no Louis Napoleon, the Ghana *coup d'etat* of February 24, 1966, was a counter-revolution of a classic type. It is only necessary to underline this point because the event has been widely represented in the British Press as the substitution of a popular, liberalising regime for a hated autocracy. (It is customary, of course, for counter-revolutions to be presented in this way by their promoters and backers.) No doubt the coup *was* popular in a certain sense—in the sense explained by Mr. Cameron Duodo, editor of the Ghanaian edition of *Drum* (who, when I knew him, was living comfortably in Accra, but has since found it convenient to reveal himself as a 'self-advised exile') in an article in *The Observer* of March 13:

> 'I was astounded by the spontaneous demonstrations of the people,' Colonel Apiah said. 'One man gave me a bottle of champagne just like that.'

The coup, that is to say, was 'popular' in the sense that it was approved by the bourgeoisie (or a substantial section of it) and by those elements among the urban population that can always be persuaded to parade as stage crowds in front of Western television cameras—and had no doubt been demonstrating as enthusiastically for Kwame Nkrumah and the Convention People's Party a week or two earlier as they demonstrated on this occasion against them. Of course food shortages, rising prices, import restrictions, gave rise to discontent and desire for change that any new regime could exploit, temporarily, in its favour. But there is no evidence that the coup was 'popular' in the deeper sense that it was genuinely supported and welcomed by the mass of the Ghanaian people.

I have described the Ghana counter-revolution as 'classic' because it reveals certain characteristics that are typical of counter-revolutions in contemporary African, Asian and Latin American states—and, in some respects also, in 19th Century Europe. At the same time it

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has its own distinct features, associated with Ghana's history and social structure and the special part which Ghana has played, during the nine years since independence, in the struggle for African liberation. It therefore deserves careful study, both as an example of a general pattern and as a special case. I shall confine myself in this article to a few preliminary remarks.

First, whatever its mistakes and weaknesses (which inevitably in the present situation are presented in the grossest and most exaggerated form), the CPP Government, against which the coup was directed, was an essentially progressive regime. It was attempting to lay the foundations of a socialist economy; to reduce economic dependence by relatively rapid industrialisation; to achieve a rapid expansion and improvement of free public education at all levels. Directly and through a variety of Pan-African organisations (which it played a major part in helping to bring into being) it gave practical support to movements seeking national liberation in territories remaining under colonial rule. It exposed the manoeuvres, and sought to resist the pressures, of neo-colonialism (thereby earning, naturally enough, the deep hostility of the neo-colonial network). As a means to overcome these pressures, and as a precondition of any really effective advance towards Socialism, it worked for the realisation of an African political union. It attempted to give definite meaning to the concept of 'positive neutralism' by avoiding an exclusive Western orientation and developing closer political, economic and cultural relations with the socialist countries. (None the less, the number of specialists and technicians from the West and from the capitalist countries in general greatly exceeded the number from the socialist world.)

Second, the bourgeoisie had an active and long-standing dislike for Nkrumah and the CPP. Since, contrary to the view generally put forward in the Western press, a considerable degree of liberty of expression existed in pre-coup Ghana, this dislike was commonly and vigorously expressed by members of the Ghanaian intelligentsia in particular—and, together with the views of taxi-drivers and dancing-girls, formed the basis for much of the 'objective reporting' of Western journalists. In crude terms the bourgeoisie can be regarded as consisting of (a) the hereditary bourgeoisie, those belonging to the great Coastal professional and intellectual dynasties; (b) those from other sectors of Ghanaian society who, through attendance at 'the best' secondary schools and/or universities, had acquired bourgeois status and tended to absorb bourgeois culture and values.

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In a sense the bourgeoisie never forgave Nkrumah and the CPP — the party of the petty bourgeois, the 'Verandah Boys', the *sans-culottes*—for having defeated them in the struggle for power in 1949-51 and thus established themselves as the political heirs of the British. To say that this bourgeoisie had no ideas is perhaps an exaggeration. They had in fact one central idea: that they themselves were an élite, whose social status and superior intellectual qualifications equipped them for the exercise of political power. Everything that Nkrumah and the CPP could do they could do better. It was primarily the banned United Party (whose precise part in the coup remains obscure and controversial) and its predecessors, that provided a means of political expression for this bourgeoisie. But of much greater importance, from the standpoint of effective power, was the fact that they manned the higher ranks of the Civil Service (including the Diplomatic Service and the Police), the Judiciary, the teaching profession, the various Church hierarchies—and the Armed Forces.

This leads to the third point: Ghana under the CPP regime was far from being the kind of 'totalitarian' state controlled by an all-powerful 'monolithic' party that appears in the stereotypes of Western writers and journalists. Nor was it, as Mr. Dennis Austin, in a petulant little attack on Nkrumah and the pre-coup system in *New Society* of March 3, asserts, 'a ridiculous, cruel and capricious form of personal dictatorship'. The system, as anyone who took the trouble to observe its actual working quickly discovered, was essentially pluralistic. The party might claim to be the only source of power within the state. But in practice power was diffused among a variety of institutions and agencies, subject only to the partial, intermittent, and frequently ineffective, control of the party. The Civil Service, the Judiciary, the Universities, the Public Education system, the Army, functioned as great estates of the realm, possessing a considerable degree of autonomy and initiative, subject to occasional directives (which were by no means always carried out) from party, Cabinet and President. In practice the Civil Service was controlled by (in general very competent) British-trained bourgeois senior civil servants; the Judiciary was controlled by bourgeois judges; the Universities were controlled by bourgeois dons; the Army was controlled by bourgeois Sandhurst-trained officers. Of course the President could dismiss a Chief Justice or a Chief of Staff, make life difficult for a Vice-Chancellor, deport (and later bring back) a Bishop. But what difference did such individual acts make to the working of

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the system? Indeed, those promoted to take the place of those dismissed might (as in the case of the Police) prove to be less loyal, more hostile to the objectives of party and President, than those dismissed.

Why, it may be asked, did Nkrumah and the party tolerate for so long a system in which there was such a sharp and evident contradiction between the socialist, revolutionary, Pan-African objectives for which they claimed to stand and the predominantly bourgeois, conservative, territorialist norms of those who controlled the institutions through which they were obliged to work? Partly because Nkrumah, whatever else he was, was not a 'cruel and capricious dictator'. Revolutionary in his conceptions and aims, he was essentially Fabian in his political methods. He believed in putting people whom he thought he could trust into positions of power within the system rather than seeking fundamental transformations of existing political structures. In any case, to bring about such transformations, to replace bourgeois civil servants and officers with socialist civil servants and officers it would have been necessary to have an adequate supply of committed Socialists, with the requisite theoretical and professional training. Such people simply did not exist as yet in any numbers, though it was the intention that the Winnebah College of Political and Economic Science should in time produce them. But Winnebah itself was under heavy fire from the right wing within the party. And Nkrumah had to work within the limitations imposed by the actual character of the party as well as those imposed by the actual character of the state and its institutions. Far from being the kind of Tamburlaine figure that appears in the fantasies of Mr. Austin and others, he was in fact a highly intelligent, somewhat Utopian, radical, with a good grasp of the history of his time, confronted with a very restricted range of political choices.

Fourth, one must take account of the serious weaknesses within the CPP itself. In regard to these there is not much room for disagreement. Over the past ten years the party had tended to undergo the kind of process of deterioration that is familiar in the history of radical nationalist parties. Though devoted, disinterested and hard-working individuals could still be found at all levels of the organisation, the party bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy of the para-party organisations, had tended to transform themselves into a political élite, using their status within the party to further their own careers (and those of their relations and friends) and to achieve a bourgeois style of life. The party machine had come to be used as an instrument

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for transmitting orders to the people, and for mobilising them to take part in periodic rallies and celebrations, rather than for expressing their demands and criticisms, developing their political understanding, and enabling them to play an effective part in the work of economic and social reconstruction. The cult of Nkrumah's personality, the mystique of the leader, was used by the Old Guard of the party to cover up deficiencies in party organisation and strategy. The committed Socialists within the party were in a definite minority, and, though their relations with the press and with Winnebah, together with Nkrumah's protection in intra-party conflicts, gave them a certain influence, they had no effective body of mass support. Party discipline had become weakened, and internal faction-fighting gave encouragement to those who were working for counter-revolution. (At the same time it is important not to exaggerate these weaknesses. Little recent work has been done on the organisation and functioning of the CPP at a local level. My own guess is that democratic processes and attitudes have survived in many areas to a much greater extent than is often supposed.)

The Ghana counter-revolution cannot, of course, be explained simply in relation to its internal causes—the contradictions between the interests and objectives of the CPP and those of the bourgeoisie, the conflicts within the party and the running down of its organisation, the special function of the officer caste as the shock troops of the bourgeoisie. Its success (from a short-term point of view) depended also on external factors—above all on the drastic fall in the cocoa price, Ghana's principal export, which played a far larger part in bringing about a situation of economic crisis, favourable to military adventures, than all the prestige projects, waste of resources, mismanagement and corruption, which constantly recur in the flood of anti-CPP and anti-Nkrumah propaganda unloosed in the Western press. We shall have to wait for more evidence before we can say with any degree of definiteness how important and direct a part the Western powers, their business interests and intelligence agencies, played in bringing about the downfall of Nkrumah's government. To judge from the chorus of satisfaction which greeted this event it can hardly have been negligible. One thing at least is clear: the real ground of Western hostility to Nkrumah and the CPP was not (as is often claimed) that they were illiberal or corrupt—reactionary regimes, like those of General Abboud in the Sudan or of the late Sardauna of Sokoto in Northern Nigeria, can be as illiberal and corrupt as they like and they will continue to enjoy the goodwill of

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the West. Nkrumah's unforgivable crime was that he sought to be progressive, Socialist, anti-colonial, Pan-African, neutralist, not a puppet of the West. Hence the need, from the point of view of the West, to replace his regime, which did, in however inadequate and partial a way, genuinely seek to enlarge human 'liberty, equality and fraternity', with one that would take its stand on the unambiguous, and entirely acceptable, principles of 'Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery' —that would reduce public expenditure, open up new fields to private investment, disinterest itself in the struggle for liberation throughout the African continent, break its ties with the socialist countries, and, in general, transform itself into a nice, docile, chauvinistic, Western-orientated, English-speaking version of the Ivory Coast, incapable of playing any significant part in African or world history.

ANNOUNCEMENT

25 Years Ago . . .

Bernard Shaw wrote on the occasion of our 20th Anniversary:

> I forget the name of the Frenchman who, on being asked what part he had played in the French Revolution, replied that he had survived it. The survival of *Labour Monthly* for twenty years is a feat no less remarkable.

And over the years since then, personalities from all over the world have written in this vein; for the survival of a socialist journal, without wealthy backers or subsidies is indeed remarkable in the modern press jungle.

Thus, we are proud once more to announce our lusty liveliness still, as we reach on July 1 of this year our 45TH ANNIVERSARY of continuous publication under the unbroken editorship of R. Palme Dutt.

We intend to celebrate this event with a 'Birthday Party' on Thursday, June 30, at the Chatham Restaurant, Victoria (look for further details next month), where our readers and supporters can meet the Editor, Board and Contributors of *Labour Monthly*.

Will you join us in the celebration and help make it a success by giving *your* magazine a special Birthday Donation?

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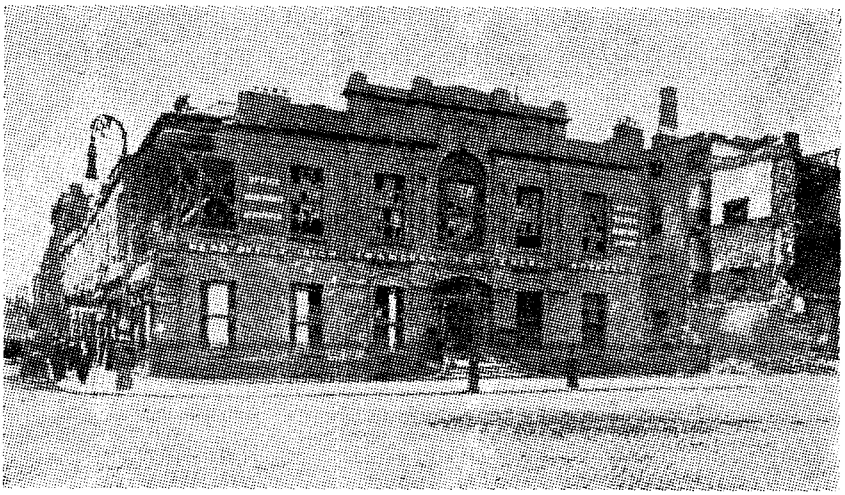
EASTER WEEK, 1916



ABOVE can be seen Liberty Hall, which was and still is the Headquarters of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, and the Irish Citizen Army. Although it was not occupied during 1916, the British brought a gun-boat up the Liffey and shelled it. It was on a press in Liberty Hall that the Proclamation of the Republic (to be seen on the opposite page) was printed. This Proclamation was read by Patrick Pearse, President of the Provisional Government, at noon on Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, from the steps of the General Post Office in O'Connell Street, Dublin, which had been taken over as the Republican Headquarters.

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THE PROCLAMATION OF POBLACHT NA H EIREANN.

THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC

TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN: In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty: six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on Behalf of the Provisional Government,

THOMAS J. CLARKE.

SEAN Mac DIARMADA. THOMAS MacDONAGH.

P. H. PEARSE. EAMONN CEANNT.

JAMES CONNOLLY. JOSEPH PLUNKETT.

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DUBLIN INSURRECTION EASTER, 1916

AT midday on Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, members of the Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army (under the command of James Connolly) occupied the General Post Office in the centre of Dublin, and in the Proclamation reproduced on page 169 declared the separation of Ireland from Great Britain, and the establishment of an independent democratic Republic.

Owing to accidental circumstances, the general rising that was to have followed, was confined to three counties. But Dublin was held for a week, South Galway for four days, and North Wexford for nearly ten days. This was the first general insurrection planned since 1867, and important changes had taken place in Ireland in the half century between.

Most important was the numerical increase of the working class while all other classes declined in numbers. An all-embracing Irish trade union movement had been established, linked with an independent Irish Labour Party. These were not involved in the Rising, but the working class was independently represented in the Citizen Army which had evolved from a workers' defence force established in the hard-fought general lock-out of 1913.

The same Irish Republican (sometime Revolutionary) Brotherhood which organised 1867 was at work in 1916. It now contained a larger working class element, and its outlook had been substantially influenced by the working class struggles of the 'great unrest'. Every signatory of the proclamation is known to have stood for Larkin against William Martin Murphy, the leading employer in the 1913 lock-out.

A feature of 1916 connected with the increased working class participation and outlook is that for the first time in history, a rising took place in which there were widespread differences in the top leadership and much confusion at the end but not a single informer. The authorities were totally in the dark.

The Dublin rising was the first break in the imperialist war front. The day previously the British Cabinet meeting in London had decided to continue the war; and the British Socialist Party conference had broken with Hyndman and decided to fight it by every possible means. Easter 1916 was therefore a crucial turning point in the history of these islands and of Europe.

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Lenin immediately grasped the significance of the Easter rising. He defended it against those who described it as a 'putsch' and used its experience to vindicate his theses on self-determination, which had concluded that the 'purely national' aspirations of small nations had an important part to play against imperialism. It gave rise to his famous aphorism that 'Whoever expects a "pure" social revolution will *never* live to see it'.

The proclamation, one of the most important democratic documents of our time, is believed to have been drafted by Pearse, and revised by Connolly and MacDonagh.

Its declaration of the right of the Irish people to the *ownership* of Ireland is in line with Connolly's conception of the transition to socialism through a national democratic revolution, as are the passages guaranteeing civil liberty and 'equal rights and equal opportunities'.

They are also however in the tradition of Irish republicanism which derived much from left Jacobinism and had contact with the International Workingmen's Association.

All seven of the signatories, and nine others, were executed by the British military authorities after summary courts-martial (apart from the show trial of Casement) the Irish being treated neither as prisoners of war, nor as British citizens entitled to trial by their peers and equals. The result of the rising and its repression was to raise a new generation of revolutionary leaders in Ireland. These gained a partial victory in the establishment of a separate Irish State in twenty-six counties.

The rising is being commemorated officially on a big scale in the Republic. Its present rulers, however, strongly influenced by neo-colonialism, are treating the Proclamation as justifying a present in which its objects have not yet been attained.

DID YOU READ *Anglo-Irish Trade Agreement* by C. Desmond Greaves in the February issue? Or his review of *The Irish Question* by N. Mansergh in the March issue? Both are still available from The Manager, 134, Ballards Lane, N.3. Make sure you don't miss them! Send a 2s. postal order now.

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TRADE UNIONS—STUDENT STYLE

* Paul Moorman

THERE is something rotten in the state of student unions in this country.† Insofar as they can be said to exist at all within the Universities, they do so largely at the level of social clubs, providing amenities for their members without showing any of the cohesive homogeneity of purpose befitting any organisation which claims to represent a significant slice of the citizens of tomorrow. Their influence on events in the outside world and their capacity to shape even those aspects of society intimately affecting them is negligible compared with that of many of their opposite members abroad.‡ All this is not to say that the student leaders themselves are responsible for this state of affairs; or are indeed sitting complacently back admiring the status quo. On the contrary, several unions in the country have made inroads into committees of their University or College which directly determine fundamental policy. They are, that is, playing a role, albeit very limited, in forming the future of the institution to which they belong. Their power on these committees is roughly analogous to workers' representation on management boards—with one vital difference, one which goes a long way towards explaining the apparent inertia and spinelessness which seems to afflict most student unions. This is the inherent difficulty of strike action. However reasonable a request or rational an argument, if the University authorities reject it, there is an end to the matter.

The student unions have autonomy only in as far as those administering our higher education policy decree it proper. There is no absolute financial or legal autonomy. Union money comes from union fees paid to the union on a per capita basis by the Local Education Authorities. The University advises the Authority as to what constitutes a reasonable amount, and it is perfectly within their power to 'request' withdrawal of the fees 'if public money is being used in an irresponsible fashion'. Examples of such irresponsibility might be the subsidising of meals on the union premises or the allocation of funds to student political societies. And as far as legal

* Paul Moorman is President of Southampton University Students Union.

† In this context, a Student Union is taken to mean the representative body of the students, called in some Universities, Students' Representative Councils and in others, Junior Common Rooms.

‡ The French National Union of Students and their teachers, supported by the French TUC, carried out a three-day nation-wide strike from March 15-18 in protest against the Fouchet Plan for Higher Education.

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autonomy goes, while it is true that the existence of the union *as such* is protected by law, this in no way prevents the University taking away all its office space, expelling without trial its officials, and freezing all its finances. The plight of the student unions in this country is, then, if they want to voice independent opinions on the problems facing society, nothing short of desperate. The very system of dependence on University authorities, LEAs, and the Department of Education and Science renders them progressively impotent, straight-jackets all attempts at self-emancipation, and throws them wide open to the often heard charge of being without social conscience. What is therefore to be done to bring about the changes necessary to allow student unions, along with trade unions, to freely and effectively express their refusal to endorse acts of exploitation and intolerance, whichever section of the working class may be being attacked? And to so express their sympathies by recourse to the ultimate deterrent: a solidarity strike?

The argument that financial autonomy would be achieved if student unions were to refuse the LEA Union Fee allowance and collect dues individually from each member is an untenable one. It is not difficult to visualise a situation where the union would so clash with authority that student maintenance grants, from whence the dues would obviously have to come in the first place, would themselves be suspended. If it is then argued that such a grant system does not in fact widely obtain in Western Europe or America, and that the price of financial autonomy is the sacrifice of subsistence allowances from the Government, then it must be pointed out right away that it is an axiomatic and inalienable right of every citizen to enjoy, and a basic duty of every state to provide, education free to whatever level the individual requires it or desires it. And that although the upper-middle classes, used to paying public school fees for their children anyway, might not object to continuing such payment for an extra three or four years for the privilege of sending them to University, the implementation of such a proposal would lead us straight back to those palmy days of the eighteenth century when only Oxford and Cambridge existed in England, and was largely peopled by those born to rule but not to think. Clearly the leaders of the student movement must find another means of solving the problem.

The answer would seem to lie in obtaining the rewriting of those sections of the Charters of the Universities which relate to student unions. There are in preparation at the moment Charters for the Technological Universities: the National Union of Students has

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been pressing the Privy Council very hard to incorporate certain basic principles for students in these Charters, and to extend these suggestions to the already existing Charters. These include the right of appeal against expulsion and the right to be legally represented at disciplinary tribunals, the right of free association, and the right to effective representation on University governing bodies at all levels. To these should be added the right to complete financial autonomy over the funds granted them in the same way as the University itself enjoys this right with respect to Treasury grants.

In other words, all these measures propose to take the student community out of the nebulous limbo-land it now inhabits somewhere between schoolchild and adult, and place it squarely where it belongs: a part of society, not apart from it, subject to the same privileges and strictures as everybody else, and, above all, answerable for its actions to the judiciary of the land, not the often despotic and authoritarian Star Chambers of the Universities, hidden far from the public gaze and having to justify themselves only to themselves.

The bringing into being of such Charters would mean that student unions were legal, self-sufficient entities, and that their members could be removed from the University only for academic or criminal reasons. Grants would cease to be 'aids to the pursuance of education': the awarding of state funds to students would have to be regarded as an *essential* part of the nation's expenditure, and not as a favour. Grants would, in fact, be abolished and be replaced by an apprentice's wage. And this in its turn would involve the abolition of that pernicious class-weapon, the Means Test.

There are two major difficulties facing students seeking to implement the demands of the Charters. First, while our country's priorities are in their present muddle; while the Government is committed to the illogicalities of a mixed economy, and while there is no centralised socialist planning; while, in short, we remain rooted in the morass of capitalism, then there will be no time or money for such 'peripheral' items as the radical rebuilding of our structure of higher education.

And second, even if there were money, how could we persuade the Government of today to risk giving it to a body which might unleash violent impassioned criticism against it and its actions and indeed against the atavistic presuppositions about society which underlie such actions? The student's job is to think, but not too often and not hard, and above all not out loud.

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YOUTH ON THE MARCH

Tony Hetherington

Vice-Chairman, Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

THIS Easter, for the ninth year in succession, thousands of people will be taking the road to Trafalgar Square. They will be taking part in Britain's largest annual demonstration against nuclear weapons, organised by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. As always, many thousands of young people will be there; some will be marching this year for the first time, but for many the blisters and the anti-nuclear ballads of the Easter March will be no new experience.

None of the young marchers who will enter London on Easter Monday believes that his presence, or this one demonstration will, by itself, bring about disarmament. None of them believes that we will achieve *all* our objectives *immediately*. Why, then, will they come?

They will come because they believe that the danger of nuclear war has not at all lessened since CND began campaigning. They will come because they know that so far as the issue of nuclear arms is concerned, it scarcely mattered who won the General Election. They will come because they know that if peace does not prevail, then the only alternative is war.

In the politically stale atmosphere of the late 1950's, with Labour weak and the Tories gloating in power, the idealism and challenge that CND offered, presented youth with something more worthwhile than tired clichés and deliberate ambiguities. A breath of fresh air entered politics, and has never left it.

The teenagers marching this year were born in the aftermath of the second world war. They grew up in a world of ration books and shortages, followed by Hungary, Suez, Berlin, and Cuba. They knew the 'war to end all war' had not achieved this aim, and they knew that the 'war to end all tyranny' had failed also. Moreover, they knew that the next war would be the war to end humanity. They watched while successive Tory Governments poured millions of pounds into worthless projects; Blue Steel, Blue Water, Blue Streak. Now they see a Labour administration buying the F111 from the United States, and cutting housing grants to pay for an 'East of Suez' policy. It's just the mixture as before.

Most Youth CND supporters are not members of any other political organisation, and as most do not have the responsibility of buying a home or any other major item, the economic arguments against nuclear weapons are neglected by many in favour of the

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moral reasons for nuclear disarmament. In particular, the 'visible' situations such as the Vietnam war and the problem of the world's hungry loom large in the thoughts of those undertaking this year their second or third Easter demonstration.

It is perhaps only natural that the young should see with the crystal clarity of thought possessed by youth, the immense wrong that must exist when two-thirds of the world's population is underfed, and our own country alone spends over £60 per second on defence.

Britain is not alone in its headlong rush toward self-destruction. More and more nations are flexing their nuclear muscles and making threatening noises at their neighbours. By 1970 a dozen countries could have the H-Bomb. Unfortunately, science has developed arms for a world incapable of the responsibility of possessing them. To say that because of the Bomb we have avoided a third world war is to ignore Korea and Vietnam, and in no way guarantee that time will not sooner or later run out for a world dangerously near the brink.

YCND's support this Easter will come from young people of all social and educational backgrounds. This is as it should be, for the bomb knows no differences of class or creed. It is the supremely non-discriminating weapon, which kills Buddhist and Christian, capitalist and communist, without favour. Thus the government which pushes its button first is simply committing its own nation's suicide. This argument is often used by those who support the deterrent theory. They claim no country would sign its own death warrant by launching its missiles first. These people forget the willingness of President Kennedy to press the button on our behalf during the Cuba crisis. And they forget the powerlessness of the British government to stop him.

Britain is a prime target in the front line if a war should break out now. It is not without good reason the United States airmen call us 'the aircraft carrier island'. We are a pawn amongst the nuclear giants, and pawns are expendable pieces. If France forces the US to quit her bases on French territory, it is not unlikely that they will be re-sited in the Eastern part of England, already a happy hunting ground for nuclear bombers like the one that 'lost' its payload over Southern Spain recently. In an election speech a few weeks ago Liberal MP Jeremy Thorpe called on the British government to offer to accommodate the new Nato Headquarters which would be necessary if France left the Alliance. It is ironical that, probably without knowing it, Mr. Thorpe was speaking only a few miles from one of the largest government nuclear shelters in Britain. Some people will not have to whitewash their windows.

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It is today's young people who will inherit the consequences of the deeds of today's politicians. It will be a legacy of bitterness and hatred. A Germany torn in half; a Vietnam which has known so much suffering; a world which cannot survive unless tomorrow's leaders differ radically in thoughts and deeds from today's.

We in YCND are often told by older people that we will never achieve real peace. It is man's nature, we are told, to kill. But while yesterday's war was surely terrible enough, tomorrow's war will attain the chilling finality of total annihilation—a world without people. We can do little alone, but together with young people around the world we believe we can, and must, succeed in obtaining sanity out of nuclear madness.

Since time began the world has known war, but in today's world the old clichés—'for King and Country' etc.—just do not ring true. Perhaps this generation will be the one to end war. If it is not, then there is little hope for the future—or even for the existence of a future.

We shall be marching again at Easter because we want to see a Britain that stands for something really meaningful. We shall be marching for more schools and better housing; for fewer hungry and for peace in Vietnam, but most of all we shall be marching for survival. We want a future free from fear. We want our children to grow up in a safe world. We do not want our children to have to march like us.

LABOUR MONTHLY FORTY YEARS AGO

The building industry has long been vilified by the capitalist press. . . . Prior to 1906, wages and conditions were the playthings of chance, the result of good or bad organisation in a particular locality, and their stability, therefore, varied as organisation varied. . . . During the years immediately preceding 1918, it became obvious that some more stable and uniform method of procedure was absolutely necessary. As a result there came into existence the demand for a national flat rate and with it and much more important, the co-ordination of all the unions in the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives. . . . The achievement of the Federation for which the capitalist press and its dupes will never forgive it, was its successful resistance to dilution in 1919-1921.

But now with the slump came the Federation's testing time. The sliding scale began to tell against the workers, and yet it can be quite justifiably maintained that the co-ordinated efforts of the building trade unions have maintained a higher standard of living against the employers' mass attacks than any other industry and even secured national increases.

(From 'The Attack on the Building Trade', by R. Coppock, General Secretary, National Federation of Building Trades Operatives, *Labour Monthly*, April, 1926.)

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TRAINING FOR INDUSTRY

G. V. Carvell

AS technology advances there is a greater need for skilled manpower. How is Britain facing up to the problem of training the skilled men necessary for the future? Delegates at the Youth Conference of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, held in March, were clearly worried at the prospects. They complained that the skilled craftsmen of the future were being lost to the industry, because of present wages and conditions. These conditions held back school-leavers from taking up apprenticeships, but even those who enter the industry are not being properly trained. Under the Industrial Training Act, 1964, the responsibility for setting standards and for the training of youth is gradually to be taken out of the hands of individual employers and the Government have established, so far, five industrial training boards empowered to make levies on firms neglecting training and to make grants to those providing approved courses. But it will take some time before these boards can have any real effect and meanwhile there is the added problem of the 200,000 each year becoming redundant, mostly unskilled and semi-skilled, who require re-training.

It is interesting, therefore, to see the progress made in the Soviet Union. This year is the 25th Anniversary of the introduction of vocational training schemes, and Mr. V. Balkin, of the State Committee on Vocational Training, speaking on the occasion of the Anniversary, said:

> When the scope of production is growing from year to year and the structure of its branches are changing; when scientific and technological progress is proceeding at a greatly accelerated pace and mechanisation and automation are being widely introduced; when the techniques, technology and the organisation of production are radically changing in all fields of the national economy; when all these things are happening, it is necessary to revise a number of fundamental principles regarding the organisation for the training of workers.

The State Committee stress that the high standard of efficiency required for modern technology can only come from a highly qualified labour force and the 4,237 vocational training schools in the USSR, attended by 1,503,600 students, are seen as the main source of supply of the much needed workers for industry. Those in charge of the scheme positively reject the opinion that the transfer of industry to a higher technological basis and the development of automation will lead to redundancy of workers.

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The view is sometimes expressed that the broad introduction of programme controlled machines, for example, will reduce the functions of the workers to merely siting special programmes for these machines and that the workers will be completely replaced by the automatic machines.

Arguing against this conception, the Soviet authorities say that in the automatic shops of the advanced industrial establishments and on the fully mechanised production lines workers will have to prepare the machines and mechanisms, tune the equipment and carry out the necessary repairs. Some of these functions will involve manual work but this will necessarily be of such a nature that it can be performed only by workers possessing a high degree of skill and experience.

The modern worker, according to Soviet thinking, must be trained to outpace the development of automatic machines otherwise they will be unable to operate and repair them. The basic condition for technological development depends on the knowledge and experience of workers to work the new machines and the improvement of the means of production depends on the quality of training. The growing demands for high skill and experience must determine the system of training and in the Soviet Union the vocational training system is to continue to be the main training method, but steps are being taken to improve the system and enlarge its use.

It is considered that the training of workers by apprenticeship in industrial establishments fails to supply the needed training because it provides far too narrow specialisation. Workers trained as apprentices learn to perform one or two production operations and when the necessity arises for them to be transferred to other types of work, even within the same factory, they need additional training.

In discussions which have been taking place in the Soviet Union on the problems associated with the training of workers, to meet the new requirements of industry, some voices have been raised expressing the view that it is economically unprofitable to spend one-and-a-half to two years on the training of new workers at vocational schools and that it would be more expedient to provide basic training for a period of six months and further training would then be given at the point of production. The reply to this by the advocates of the vocational training schemes is to say that the saving by the use of such methods of training would prove to be an entirely false economy, and in support of this view they provide some examples based on

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investigations carried out in some of the large industrial establishments in Moscow.

At the Ball Bearing plant the workers who were trained at the vocational schools learned how to meet the requirements of more highly skilled operations two to five times quicker than those trained in the factory. At the Bantam Car Plant and the Ordzhonikidze Machine Building Plant the vocationally trained workers had eight times less rejects than the machine operators trained at the plants. At the Listchansk Chemical Plant the productivity figure of the vocationally trained workers proved to be fifteen per cent higher than the others.

Sixty per cent of the total number of industrial workers in the USSR are qualified or highly qualified and in some industries the percentage is higher. For example the figure for the chemical industry is seventy per cent and the same can be said about the machine building industry, but the demand for highly qualified workers grows continually.

Preliminary estimates of need are being based on a figure of fifteen million more workers being employed by 1970. The greatest increases are forecast for the chemical, fuel, machine building and building industries.

To meet this demand for skilled workers the advocates of the vocational training schemes are insisting that all future training should be undertaken by the training schools and that apprentice training in the factories should cease. The aim of the schools must be that of producing highly qualified workers capable of being able to raise production constantly and improve techniques.

For the present it is planned to admit to the schools by 1970 one million to one million six hundred thousand students, an increase of sixty per cent over the figure for 1965. The 1965 intake will mean that some five hundred thousand workers will enter industry each year from the schools. Of these the largest group will be made available for agriculture.

In all branches of industry the technological advances are requiring workers with new skills. 'Technical know-how' is playing an increasing role in the workers' activity in the factories and on the farms. The elements of intellectual effort, calculation and analysis is beginning to predominate and the fundamental changes which are taking place must be reflected in the organisation and methods of training.

The Soviet State Committee on Vocational Training regularly adds new specialities to the curricula of the vocational schools based

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on expected future developments in industry: for the chemical industry the training of operators for the production of caprolaktam, polypropylene, chemically pure reagents and luminophors; for the machine building industry, electric spark machine operators and adjusters of moulding and core-making machines; for the railways, specialists in the assembly, repair and use of new automatic devices and also fitters specialising in the repair of refrigerating and diesel equipment and for agriculture, specialists in the adjusting of all types of agricultural machinery, operators of suction dredges and workers in a number of specialities connected with animal breeding.

The Soviet State Committee on Vocational Training have said that the worker being trained for modern industry should have many elements in his training equal to those required by fully qualified engineers. The aim must therefore be to improve constantly not only the level of vocational and production training but also the general level of education. The trainees must be given the full opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of the social and natural sciences in addition to their technical knowledge.

The general teaching programme in the Soviet Union sets the task of providing everyone with the opportunity of obtaining secondary education. Now the training schools are to provide, alongside the specialist training, general education up to and beyond the standard of secondary education. The present term of study in the schools will be lengthened to meet this requirement. Special allocations have been made for the building of new schools at the expense of capital investment envisaged in the development of all branches of the economy.

The Soviet Union would seem to be taking steps to meet the future requirements of industry by putting forward an imaginative programme of training that make Britain's efforts in this field look very puny indeed. Britain's youth, through their unions, be they trade or student unions, need to press for appropriate schemes of training and further education for all young people.

OBITUARY

BERT WYNN

We pay tribute to a valued friend, Bert Wynn, General Secretary of the Derbyshire Miners, who died on February 22, 1966. A life-long Socialist, he was a strong supporter of *Labour Monthly*, always ready to promote publicity and sales of the magazine.

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TRENDS IN TELEVISION DRAMA

Stuart Douglass

OF course the first shots were fired by George Devine (late and greatly lamented), the Royal Court Theatre and John Osborne. This first barrage, aimed at many of the bourgeois values, found its echoes in the television drama of 1957. It was Sidney Bernstein, Granada Television, and a small group of talented Canadian directors who joined the battle. Under the dual impact of the 'new realism' of the short TV drama pioneered on the American screens and the revolution on the living British stage, these dynamic immigrants sprayed our screens with an earthiness of their very own.

Up till then TV drama had been in the same bourgeois doldrums as the West End theatre, suffocated by complacent trifles and pompous platitudes with barely a life-like character to go round. The nearest any play came to an expression of significance was the flick of a maid's duster. Sylvio Narrizano and Ted Kotcheff laid the first paving stones, although they had mainly new approaches and techniques to offer, rather than a vital fresh content. However, they were important and swept away the cobwebs of a stagnant drama output. Although we were given a surfeit of American plays the values they expressed in human terms were closer to reality than any we had seen on television before.

Then Sidney Newman arrived to settle into the springy seat of ABC's Armchair Theatre. Newman assumed the responsibility for finding new British playwrights who would dig deep into the fabric of the British scene. He put writers under long-term contracts and encouraged them to write at their ease. He coupled them with fine directors (Charles Jarrett, Philip Saville) who explored the medium with imagination and without technical inhibition.

Armchair Theatre became the Royal Court and Stratford East of television drama. Of course there was not the same degree of daring and adventure that had marked the programmes of these two forcing houses. It was hardly to be expected that an industry, which was committed to the interests of commercial advertisers and which was bound up with shareholders' investments, could allow freedom to creative artists to question the very foundations of a society in the framework of which the Moguls had built up their profit-hungry empire. This was the time when television was a 'licence to print money' and in a sense Newman was enabled to take advantage of the fact. Budgets were looser and he was permitted to spend more on

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rama (to save the face of an industry that was becoming self-onscious of the easy money it was making).

In two years Sidney Newman had produced two new writers who vere to have as much of an effect on British TV drama as Chayefsky ind Mosel had had on the American side. They were Clive Exton ind Alun Owen.

It is important to remember that just as George Devine and Joan Littlewood had propelled the Osbornes, Weskers and Delaneys into .he theatrical orbit and were responsible for all that is best in drama today, Newman was a major factor in the creation of our modern TV dramatist. The living theatre of the future will benefit from his work. Without him the David Mercer of yesterday and the Nell Dunn of today would have been long delayed.

Clive Exton was Newman's major discovery. His plays were a genuine attempt to dramatise relationships between people under real basic stresses. His earlier days were possibly overscored by the *atmosphere* of relationships, but his plays spoke with a genuine untrammelled respect for people and their crippled situations. As he progressed Exton more and more exposed the social and economic pressures on his characters. He cared enough about them not to allow them to hump around the full load of blame for their deficiencies. And in doing so he ran into trouble with the 'censors'. I will deal with the question of censorship a little later.

Alun Owen appeared to take the opposite course. At first (in his fine plays 'No Tram to Lime Street' and 'Lena, Oh my Lena') he was concerned with roots and issues of class. His dramas were effortless models of construction and replete with depth and insight. But style and sound and turn of phrase started to dominate his work. His examination of roots turned into a nostalgia for roots long dead. He turned from the causes and despaired of the effects. Owen's change of direction was understandable. The pressures brought about by the Companies' tightening of the purse and the artists and intellectuals continual struggle to keep up standards against the demands of commercial interests were beginning to tell on all writers. So Armchair Theatre ran into all sorts of sticky waters and the tide turned. It entered its decline, Newman left, the contracts system was broken up. The spotlight turned onto the BBC.

With its resources and new techniques the BBC was the obvious hothouse for new drama. But although it was not in the business for the direct nurturing of shareholders' profits, it was (and is) dominated by an oppressive class philosphy. The impact of Newman's

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work at ABC had not gone amiss with the Corporation however. Somehow David Mercer managed to burst through to become the beacon of the next generation of dramatists.

In a way there had been a hint of things to come when the BBC screened David Turner's 'Train Set' in 1960. The following year the Mercer threesome was inaugurated. 'Where The Difference Begins' stormed on to the screen with its accurate portrayal of a British working-class family, politically based, and reflecting the resentment and fierce rebellion of the new generation. Mercer's protest was as much directed against years of Tory misrule as had been the Royal Court playwrights. And it ranged as far. His second play, 'A Climate of Fear' the following year, showed a young CND rebel and his agonised protest against atomic weapons. In 1963 came the last of the trilogy, 'The Birth of a Private Man', which also marked the death of Mercer's earlier positive stand. It was remarkable in that it expanded to take in the whole arena of cold-war ethics. But it was on a middle of the road course and contained the seeds of Mercer's own deficient understanding of the class situation. His lack of faith in any political ideal culminated in the death of his hero on the Berlin wall, bullet-ridden by both sides, negative to a degree.

It would be unrealistic to under-rate Mercer's contribution to TV drama. He was to television what Wesker had been to the theatre: a fine, talented playwright but without a convincing blueprint of life, yearning for, yet alienated from, the past. Although his plays will stand out above all others as dynamic reflections of our age they are not technical works of art in the truest sense. For Mercer was not an easy playwright to discipline to the awesome limitations of the television screen. Writing for television has a technique all of its own.

So for two years BBC drama retreated once more to catch its breath and Sidney Newman took over the department. For two years nothing especially significant in the way of new drama appeared until 'Up The Junction' and Nell Dunn last November. The play was highly criticised by all reactionaries and many progressives. It was said to concern itself overmuch with the backwaters of life. It was called sensational. Battersea had been misrepresented, some said. But whether or not there was justice in any of those opinions the play invested its characters with a special dignity and sense of purpose. The freedoms they indulged in (some called it licence) were freedoms they had nurtured or won. Their strength was their ability to adapt themselves wholly to their situations and live their lives to the full.

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They rose above their squalid environments, and they came through their troubles, they lived natural lives and we understood them, loved them, pitied them and grieved with them. I suspect that much of the shock at this production had to do with the fact that many people on all sides had been blinded to the sex behaviourism of a section of society for so long that Nell Dunn's revelation had a traumatic effect on them.

But the most important thing about the play was Nell Dunn's belief in people's ability to mould their circumstances and not become the pawns of 'fate' and 'inadequacy'. It was and is one of the prerequisites of a socialist writer. This may not have been a truly socialist play but it was an approach to life which if followed through could lead to the appearance of the first socialist playwright in television. Nell Dunn will have to battle with the same forces that have vanquished others—compromise and self-censorship, low fees, restricted budgets, a lack of training facilities, the demands of series writing and threats of cuts in drama output, but if she is anything like her characters she could have the power to pull through and achieve greatness in her field.

Contrary to most claims, censorship does militate against drama writers on television. Many plays have been banned on both channels over the past sixteen years. Only a few have been banned at top level and this has led to a general assumption that censorship is only an incidental factor in the screenwriters' dilemma. It is not. It is a major factor. Most plays have gone by the board or been altered at lower levels by creative people with their eye to safeguarding their jobs. The full belly or the carrot of security is the fuse that makes a man or woman sensitive to what the bosses would accept. None of this, of course, is stated in any contract or at any interview. There are many ways of editing a script and expunging dangerous philosophies. One is to tell a writer that he is preaching. Another is to tell him not to give the audience any answers, thereby destroying the commitment inherent in his work.

But the most ruthless form of censorship is the one that the writer imposes on himself. He will just not tackle a subject if he feels there is a danger of it being rejected. Maybe too many writers are too half-hearted, too careful in this direction. A lot of them become cynical and turn either to hack work, or they adopt the classic attitude of the anarchist, damning everything at every turn.

When a play is banned at board level at the BBC or by the Independent Television Authority at least the issue is clear. A protest

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can be mounted and directed towards a palpable group of people. But when self-censorship or editing occurs no one hears a rustle of disorder. This is a pernicious, unspoken acceptance of a social pattern, an almost impenetrable barrier against change. A ruling class philosophy dominates an entire industry in this way, and imposes itself on the minds of millions of people.

Nobody should be aloof about TV. It is the chief dispenser of philosophy, propaganda and pap in this our age and will remain so for many generations to come. Standing away from it blindfolded is not getting anyone anywhere. The class nature of its content must be changed and this can only be done by watching its output and acting to improve its quality.

TV may seem to have been with us for many years. It may be just another stick of furniture to many of us. But it is in its infancy. All progressive people have a duty to take up the reins of responsibility for its conduct. They must oppose false theorising which would have us believe that 'the people only get what they want'. In fact the people get what they are *made* to want most of the time and that usually depends on what shows the biggest profit to the companies that advertise and consequently to the TV companies themselves. Quick, easy mush is cheaper to present than thought-provoking drama. They call it 'entertainment'. What a debasement of that word.

Many millions of pounds have been coined by this process over the years and the profiteers have ploughed little back into the industry. The revolutions in quality and content that have taken place have been the work of a handful of producers, writers and directors ever caring about their real responsibility to the public and with an intrinsic respect for the medium. They have had little appreciation of their efforts (not to mention those of designers, composers, technicians and a host of others).

If given half the chance, the TV moguls will cut drama right out of their schedules and reduce television to the appalling wasteland that afflicts the American TV scene. There are no single shot plays at all over there; just a long string of banal, routine sketches on life as it never existed anywhere—half-hour comedy series, hour-long cowboy, detective, spy and sex capers designed to hypnotise audiences through a cacophonic monotone into an appreciation for the commercial 'messages'.

The immediate future for TV drama in this country appears to rest in the hands of the writers themselves. It is in their interests to work within the Writers Guild for an increase of fees to a £500

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minimum for an hour's play, with a target of £1,000 within three years. This may sound a lot to a layman, but a good play takes up to four months to write. Writers should strive to maintain and increase output of TV drama, their basic livelihood. They should acquaint themselves with all forms of censorship within the industry and develop their struggle for freedom of expression on the screen.

Progressive people can back up this campaign. They can write in, or phone whenever they have an opinion to express on the plays they see, be they good or bad. They can pass resolutions at their meetings and generally assume a responsible attitude towards the content of TV drama.

None of this is meant to imply that Mrs. Mary Whitehouse should be encouraged in her 'clean up television' campaign. Her misdirected organisation aims to 'protect' the public from 'smut' and 'obscenity' on the air. Mrs. Whitehouse's interpretation of 'smut' encompasses anything that takes the lid off the phoney official attitudes of our society towards sex behaviour. Her society spends its time trying to keep the lids tightly sealed on the reactionary saucepans. Underneath these lids, as Kenneth Tynan pointed out not so long ago on BBC3, not only simmer the realities of our sex mores, but also the rotten stew of the society capitalism has spawned.

Writers will get nothing but interference from that quarter in their efforts to describe the condition of life and bridge the chasms of understanding. The lids must come off. The stinking pot must be exposed for all to see. For unless we lay bare the decadence of the old, we cannot lay the foundations of the new and inaugurate the socialist reconstruction of our corporate life.

SCIENCE & SOCIETY

Established as an independent journal of Marxism in 1936, *Science & Society* is the oldest publication extant devoted to the theory of Marxism. It publishes articles in all areas, and has included among its contributors such noted authorities as Paul A. Baran, J. D. Bernal, V. Gordon Childe, Maurice Dobb, W. E. B. Du Bois, J. B. S. Haldane, Oskar Lange, Harold J. Laski, Joan Robinson and Paul M. Sweezy.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Modern Capitalism
Andrew Shonfield
Oxford University Press, 456 pp., 55s.

MR. SHONFIELD WITH GREAT industry has analysed what he calls 'the changing balance of public and private power'—in the words of the sub-title to his book. But to call it *Modern Capitalism* is surely a misnomer if he really were to cast his eyes over all that has been happening in the western world of capitalism in the last twenty years or so—wars, devastation, famine, and corruption.

Agreed he proves his case that the large monopolies in one way or another have been increasing in varying degrees their control over the state apparatus of the countries he investigates: Britain, France, West Germany, Italy, Holland, Sweden, and the United States. Agreed he shows, as in France, that the inter-dependence of the monopolies and the State has organisationally become very close, said to be mainly due to the past history of France's economy. Agreed that in Britain and the USA these organisational links seem still relatively weak. Agreed also that he significantly admits that in the United States this organisational link has tightened very much indeed in the case of two industries, that of war and of road traffic linked with housing development: in the latter case breaking up completely the inveterate inter-state rivalries and anti-Federal attitudes, forcing the Federal State to assert its over-riding authority in the interests of the road transport monopolies and housing developers.

The two world wars compelled each national capitalist complex to become intimately related with its government in order to survive, i.e. to continue to make the maximum profit it was capable of; at the same time the State exercised that modifying influence to prevent one section of this complex from pursuing its aim of maximum profit to the detriment of the others to the extent that it endangered the whole system. True also that in these two world wars this form of state capitalism became the means of making millions and billions of profit for the monopolies, with the state piling up its pinnacle of war debt, which became the basis of the enormous credit system that each capitalist unit now utilises to extend its production for even greater profit still.

But Mr. Shonfield has become so obsessed with the institutional complex of this monopoly-state inter-relationism, that is state capitalism—that he now denies his past. For in the Introduction to his book, he says that he no longer believes, as he said he did in the 1930's, in the 'ineradicable destructiveness of capitalism' (p. XV). Now he eulogises its 'dynamism and orderliness'. (Same page).

Really look around you Mr. Shonfield, through the tentacles of OECD, EEC, EFTA, IMF, NATO, SEATO, etc. and all the other initials of international institutions, let alone those of each separate unit. Has there been a year when one or other unit of this world of yours has not been engaged in wars and warlike 'confrontations'—all fundamentally due to these Western so dynamic and orderly countries of your imagination bestially trying to increase their profits of exploitation? The Korean war with its shameless profit-seeking sharks making their pile out of the huge commodity price rises of those years; the division of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan, the easier for Britain and America to increase their profit from its more effectual exploitation; the 'orderly' Suez invasion with the attempted

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invasion of Syria and the Lebanon; the destruction of Iranian national democracy arising primarily out of the conflict between the British and U.S. oil monopolies; the long drawn-out attempt to bring Cyprus and Algeria to their knees; the uproar over Cuba daring to challenge USA's mighty monopolies; the disgraceful gun-boat and CIA machinations in British Guiana cynically provoking racialism to try and gain their ends; the divide and rule policy finally resulting in an Indian-Pakistan war; the Britishers' war, first against Malaya, and now against Indonesia with the feudal Malayans dutifully on their side; and now the latest, this most horrible Vietnam war!

Is all this orderliness; is it dynamism? Maybe it is so in the corridors of power of the monopolies and their governments, but not in all the distant quarters of the earth where the profit from the exploited peoples is run up.

You talk, Mr. Shonfield, of there being no more dire poverty, but remember the 7½ million at or below the poverty line here in Britain (as was analysed so effectively by Alan Brown in his appraisal of the work of Townsend and Abel-Smith in last month's issue); remember the many millions more in the United States and the hundreds of millions throughout the world (or was your recent book *The Attack on World Poverty* so successful as all that?).

Has it been orderly, Mr. Shonfield, to construct enormous blocks of flats for the wealthy beside the indescribable conditions that exist in the slums? Of course, as the recent property boom demonstrated, this orderliness was due to a revolting scramble for profit.

Does British capitalism show one streak of dynamism in having, down the years since 1945, one crisis followed closely by yet another in its balance of payments, resulting in Britain 'slithering' down the road to ruin, as Thorneycroft blurted out in 1948—and for all its so-called affluence was still doing so in 1965? So Harold Wilson admitted at the annual banquet of the Overseas Bankers Club in February when he said that the reserves were becoming depleted to such an extent in July and August last year that 'there was doubt whether we could hold the situation for more than perhaps a few days' (*The Times*, February 8, 1966). But this plight was covered up by the highly respectable merchant and central banks of the world, terrified as they were that British devaluation might well be followed by their own.

No, Mr. Shonfield, you have also forgotten the welter of corruptive practices that have accompanied this profit making. Or perhaps these are the 'more interesting things to bother about' that you say, in your introduction, the youth have today, in contrast to 'capitalism's destructiveness' that you so foolishly were concerned with in your youth? First there is that periodic stream of tax evasion scandals partly exposed by Titmus' demonstration of the hollowness of the so-called redistribution of wealth. That stream recently burst out again in the bond-washing scandal. It was claimed (e.g. *Sunday Times*, January 30, 1966) that city circles had made some £3½ million profit out of selling and rebuying through different but syndicated hands some £200 million of gilt-edged bonds in 1965 before the Stock Exchange authorities felt compelled to intervene. But as the press admitted, this tax evasion practice had been notoriously rife for many years and in spite of earlier Finance Act amendments, this new loophole had been found. Then there was the long accumulating scandal of expense accounts, partially dealt with last year.

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Now we have the statement from 'the Taxation Correspondent' of the *Financial Times* (February 21, 1966) in reviewing a book on the Corporation Tax, that its provisions will mean that 'the art of tax avoidance will flourish as never before'.

Stories of these and the other methods of getting rich quick, as well as the rising rates of profit garnered by capitalism in recent years generally, coming on top of that ever present threat of a nuclear war that you seem to have forgotten to mention, can but besmirch the intense desire of humanity for a happier life and spread its corruptive influences right through the mass of the people both old and young alike.

It is a terrifying prospect, Mr. Shonfield, to realise that you seem to have become quite shut up along your corridors of this complicated maze of monopoly capitalist and state relationships. You do not seem to see the worst as well as the best in human endeavours—some of the things you describe are indeed quite dynamic and even orderly if only they existed in a world where most of the horrors we have been forced to remind you of did not exist—such achievements as those of the technological revolution which you seem to think are one of the chief factors that will lead us to happier days.

But once again not before the new electronic and other such industries are saddled with huge debts following the present speculative booms, just as in the 19th century the railways boom resulted in that industry's inheritance of millions of watered capital, some of which a whole 100 years later with its yearly interest payments on its nationalised funds continues to keep masses of railwaymen on the poverty line—in spite, it seems, of the so-called dynamism and orderliness of these times.

HUGO RATHBONE.

Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism

Kwame Nkrumah

Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd., 260 pp., 42s.

THE IMPORTANCE of this remarkable book by the President of Ghana is increased by the events that have taken place in Ghana since its publication. With relentless facts, this foremost leader of the anti-colonialist struggle, whose record in the government of Ghana places that State in the forefront of progressive and socialistic advance in Africa, has exposed the methods of neo-colonialism by which the imperialists seek to defeat the aims of national liberation and restore their domination of the newly independent countries. Scarcely had this book been published than the neo-colonialist counter-revolutionary coup by British-trained army officers in Ghana established an illegal military regime, in place of the constitutional government. His book contains hardly a hint of anti-colonialist resort to military coups—it was obviously unwise to 'put ideas into people's heads' at the time of his writing—but the book remains of the greatest value to all who seek to understand events in the world of today and tomorrow.

When, in a few short years after the second world war, virtually the whole of the vast colonialised world became politically independent, lovers of freedom felt a surge of joy and relief; but the more thoughtful waited to see to what extent the still rich and powerful imperialist forces, accustomed over centuries to exploit the populations of their own countries and of as many others as they could grab, would really be deprived of their immense sources of colonial plunder. It was soon seen that, like the Jackdaw of Rheims after the prolonged curses of

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the Bishop 'nobody seemed one penny the worse', and the colonialists were as full of booty as ever; and, on the other side of the picture, the newly liberated countries were not reaping the benefits that most of us had expected.

How did this come about? There was certainly no question of intellectual inferiority in the ex-colonial peoples; the emergence of outstanding leaders, and of many lesser but very efficient cadres, in many countries, and the tremendous developments in the field of education, are alone enough to assure us on this point. So what was it? Dr. Nkrumah, in a penetrating Marxist analysis, gives a clear answer; the old and powerful colonialists, no longer in a position to control and distort the economies of the 'under developed' countries by direct political rule, have resorted to other methods, and have re-established, or rather retained, their power by economic and financial methods. Holding the financial resources which are still necessary for the industrial development of colonial territories, and able to fix through their powerful control of markets the prices of the great raw materials which constitute for the moment the great wealth of the territories, at any rate for as long as they can keep them weak by the 'divide and rule' game, particularly in Africa, they have succeeded in maintaining most of their power and are indeed actually widening the gap between themselves and their former 'subjects', and growing richer while many of the underdeveloped grow poorer.

Dr. Nkrumah shows us the power, the evil, and the dangers of this new form of colonial exploitation, which he calls neo-colonialism adding that it is the 'last stage of imperialism'; and at the same time he shows the remedies which lie in the hands of the peoples who have started to build their own futures. He makes very clear the immense force which these peoples will bring to bear when they unite their countries. We may perhaps, for our British scene, find in what he writes one more warning of the great danger to progress created by the masked-imperialist outlook of the Labour Party, as illustrated by no means only in Rhodesia.

D. N. PRITT.

A New Look at Britain's Economic Policy

Juliet Rhys Williams

Penguin, 180 pp., 4s. 6d.

ELINOR GLYN'S DAUGHTER—for such was the late Dame Juliet Rhys Williams—writing on economics, if not romantic, is at least unusual. The reader should not expect from this book robust rounded policies such as Britain and the labour movement need to develop our resources to meet social needs; but whilst he should look elsewhere for the solid food of economic thought, he will find here many worth-while tit-bits of shrewd observation, particularly on trade and finance.

JOHN EATON.

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reviews
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Our review of D. N. Pritt's *Right to Left* moved a new reader from Lancashire to tell us:' This must have been inspiring for people who lived through those years, but even more so for some of us getting this slice of history for the first time'.

The timely March Notes on Vietnam won a quick response—first off the mark was a casual reader who was so impressed by these that he immediately passed his copy on and paid in advance for six future issues.

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Helen Falber.

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